

SPECIAL SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

September 15, 2011

Waukesha County DHHS – Brookfield Room

12:00 – 1:30 PM

Members Present: Nichole Hunkins, Teri O'Grady, Ann Shurte, Tracey Stanislawski, Missy Kueht-Becker, Kim Emmer, Julie Turkoske, Patrick Jauguet

DHHS Liaisons Present: Jesús Mireles, Vicki Smith, Erin Zellmer, Kate Wallenslager

Visitors Present: Bruce Massman, Jen Wimmer, Stephanie Lichtig

Members Absent: Bonnie Siegel, Christine Ramlow, Deb DeMaster, Dennis Farrell, Don Daniels, Elsa Gonzales, Eve Altizer, Fatma Demirbilek, Heidi Schludt, Jen Cera, Kathy Evans, Ken & Julie Perkins, Kristin Brost, Lisa Fusco, Mary Jo Foye, Melody McCabe, Pam Kliner, Sharon Fliess, Sherry Perez, Tina Kasper, Trisha Nepper

Agenda Item #1 – Introductions

Members introduced themselves and their roles (parent or professional).

Agenda Item #2 – Solicitation of agenda items/Approval of Minutes from 5/19/2011

Julie Turkoske indicated the suggestion on the last page came from the Children's Counsel, not her, and asked for the minutes to be amended.

Nichole Hunkins made a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting, with the aforementioned amendment. The motion was seconded by Julie Turkoske and the minutes were approved.

Agenda Item #4 – Birth-to-Three Update (Missy Kueht-Becker/Jesús Mireles)

Missy reported B-3 continues to struggle financially and LSS is anticipating a \$90,000 deficit. They had anticipated that state services provided by educators would be billable, and that has not yet been implemented. Also, B-3 waiver application was rescinded by the state. The Secretary – Department of Health Services (DHS) requested they submit a request for 1937 federal funding. If approved, the 1937 funding for B-3 waiver is to be implemented January 1st. This is different than current CLTS waivers and does not require a functional screen. It does allow for benefits for parent education, and is not just a therapy driven waiver. There has been a change of administration, and the new secretary felt that 1937 is a more appropriate federal program. Missy and he have talked with administrative staff of LSS regarding options available including streamlining services in B-3. There are three different models. The state requires Waukesha County to provide local funding to the B-3 program (maintenance of effort) MOE and any additional funds from the county would increase the funding level or MOE that is required. We're concerned about being locked in to the increased funding amount when the state is decreasing their amount, thus a shift from State/Federal funding to local tax levy. The Department is requesting the state to waive an increase in their maintenance of effort in 2011

until 1937 is ready to go. Depending on what is decided, it may require us to have an increase in funding every year thereafter. LSS is committed to the B-3 program. Despite losses, they always stepped up. Because of this fiscal situation, they can't continue to absorb financial losses. Jesús is optimistic about this afternoon's call with the state. Missy prepared a PowerPoint to share with them, highlighting what would happen. Jesús is also suggesting other options that the State should consider.

Missy's annual parent listening session is scheduled for Wednesday, October 19. It has been beneficial in the past. Families have an opportunity to fill out a state survey, if they have been randomly chosen to do so. They have solicited prizes for those returning surveys. They appreciate hearing suggestions from parents who have graduated from B-3. She talked about advocacy transition and getting feedback if they'd like a training. This was done years ago and is recently re-introduced. Stephanie Lichtig suggested having a school district representative present when they start to talk about it. Missy said it's a chance for them to listen to parents and parents feel comfortable. Julie Turkoske asked if parents of 4 year olds who just transitioned are invited, and feels they might be willing to look back and share. Missy answered if they have been in the program within the year.

Agenda Item #3 – Education Segment – “How schools support children with special needs” / discussion with special education staff from the Waukesha Public School system.

Bruce Massman is with the Waukesha School District as a Coordinator for students, age 14 to 21 with cognitive disabilities. He introduced Ann Shurte and Jen Wimmer, the newly appointed district administrator, and Stephanie Lichtig, the Early Childhood Coordinator. She put early childhood programs in North High School this year, which is new and exciting.

Jen spoke regarding services in Waukesha and allocation of funding. In this time of fiscal hardship, how does that look for them. She stated they have an amazing team in the district. Their district manager has business and fiscal experience. Their viewpoint is needs based budgeting vs. what do we have to cut. They work together as a team. They've made almost \$10 million in reductions without people feeling the squeeze. They looked into and found savings in transportation; sharing routes with neighboring districts. They have developed the own in-house system with one of their vendors. Another strategy is looking at partnering on contracts, re-envisioning services, and being creative. Another helpful thing is Medicaid reimbursements are being paid. They looked at how to protect services that involved direct services to children. They have local funds, federal flow through dollars, and the formula followed is called maintenance of effort. So, there is some protection to keep services in tact supporting students and families. Theirs is a pretty lean district considering their size. Open enrollment issues were reviewed. Joining an area consortium for parent connection has been positive; providing better information and more communications.

Ann shared a handout entitles a “guide to special education-ese”, which listed general acronyms. One of the big ones is IEP, which is encouraging parents to be part of the team. LEA is used a lot, and is for local education agency. Also used a lot is LRE, or least restrictive environment, which means something different for each student during different parts of the day. They look at where the needs are best met. LRE can look different throughout the day, as well as throughout

the year, and must be flexible. Stephanie added that outcomes are affected by environment. They make determinations on what best serves individual needs. Missy asked about, and they discussed changes with four year old kindergarten. Jesús said Stephanie attends the B-3 bi-annual meeting; which includes all districts who work with B-3, PPS (computer system) hurdles. He added this helps with communication and support of one another. Jen talked about competing messages; one thing they are untangling is when families are spending their waiver dollars and policies around enrollment, accessing schools, and new laws around attendance. They have been working as a team to review and revise, and lend clarity so everyone is coaching the same message. They are working with DPI and the county to help parents be informed and not receive competing messages. Missy asked if other districts are doing the same, and Jen answered yes. Jesús said service coordinators or Kate Wallenslager should look at what message we're giving to parents. Missy suggested a transition pow-wow. Erin talked about what they tell families about waivers. Jen said they start looking at school age starting at age six, and they've been having conversations with providers. Kate talked about a waiver re-write coming, which will pose a whole new set of rules.

Bruce talked about moving on from early childhood to elementary. It's still about LRE (Least Restrictive Environment). They previously had pockets of programs, and that's no longer the case. Children are now served at their home school, with some exceptions like the medically fragile (those with one or two days a week attendance), and some hearing and visually impaired. They are now serving in seven or eight schools. Lowell and Butler have students with cochlear implants.

Ann talked about the elementary to middle school transition. The law says this is by age fourteen. So, by age thirteen they must have post secondary goals for education and employment. They must start talking about where they see the student at age 21 when they leave school. The goal is to prepare for that. There is psychiatric support and modified curriculum. They try to have two or three children working with each adult, as opposed to one-on-one of years ago. There are few that are 100% supervised. They try to limit the amount of physical support they need. The biggest shift in elementary to middle school is the start of looking at where the child will be after school at age twenty-one. Bruce said the high schools are like that also, with a more in-depth look at independence. There are fewer years left. Students are integrated. At the high school level they experience more mobility and independence. They spend more time going from class to class and meeting deadlines. Students go from a lot of parent and teacher guidance to being more independent. A couple ways children leave school are that they turn 18 and graduate with their peers. Another way is the completion system; after four years some still have needs and they have young adult services with IEP goals wrapped in it. A third way is competence diplomas; students who just can't finish, so if they are able to fulfill all competencies according to the state, they get a diploma. The state requires less minimum credits than the Waukesha School District does. In all cases the diploma they get looks like the regular school diploma, with a little different wording. There was discussion on if this is a high school diploma when a potential employer asks on a job application.

Another part of his job, Bruce explained, is young adult services (SAIL Sustaining Adults Independent Living Program). They use the community for learning, work, recreation, leisure, and learning social skills. They use city buses rather than school buses, as Waukesha North is on

a bus route. This saves money and helps with the independence piece. Students can get a disabled bus pass. The students make trips and spend time together at coffee shops, the Retzer Center, YMCA, and other places where their peers can be found. Bruce reported that there are currently two Carroll University students starting a mentoring program working with ARCH. Carroll wants to move into a national Best Buddies program, which is a program that exists at North High School. They have to come up with a one-time fee of \$10,000 to start a Best Buddies program. After that they pay \$300 annually, which includes training. They discussed the importance of peer interaction and people looking out for people. There are fifteen students presently in the Young Adult Services, and they go out in groups of three or four.

The Pewaukee parent, Kim Emmer, reported that last year they didn't have an adult program. They now have a pilot and she's heard positive feedback. They talked about other districts starting these adult programs. Pewaukee's problem is transportation as they don't have public buses. Bruce added that there are young adults moving into the Waukesha district, increasing their numbers, because they have the adult program and public transportation.

COMPASS WISCONSIN: TRESHOLD UPDATE

Waukesha County is participating in a demonstration project called CompassWisconsin Threshold. This project is to centralize the intake process for several programs and make it easier for parents to apply for multiple programs (Family Support, CLTS Waiver, Katie Beckett, Community Option Program, (COP), Intensive In-Home Treatment – Autism). As of June 6th all referrals for Family Support and Children's Waiver will go through CompassWisconsin: Threshold. It is one-stop shopping for various programs, helping to determine what clients are eligible for. We are tracking a lot of data to be sure they are following through and servicing the families. For the most part, Jesús reported, he is pleased and thinks it's a win-win for us and the state.

OTHER

Julie Turkoske shared a handout from Wisconsin Family Voices newsletters. Helps families understand Medicare topics.

She also shared a road map for counties and asked for a review of the Waukesha version which is outdated. Anyone interested in helping to update it should contact her.

AGENDA ITEMS

Some suggested future agenda items were a resource fair, other educational opportunities, and invite Child and Family supervisors to come and give an overview of their units.

The Committed Determined that the educational segment of our next meeting will be regarding the services the Child and Family Division provides.

The next meeting is November 13, 2011.

Nichole Hunkins motioned to adjourn, seconded by Missy Kueht-Becker at 1:23 p.m.